



Chair Schuring, Vice-Chair Manning and members of the Senate Select Committee on Gaming, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill 176. My name is Charlie Bassett and I operate Bassett's Market in Port Clinton, Ohio. My great grandfather started our family business in 1898 and we currently operate three grocery and hardware stores, mainly in summer tourism areas. We have always been huge supporters of our local communities and schools and continue to do so.

The COVID19 pandemic has shown that grocery stores are pandemic proof. During this time, we have had to manage uncomfortable situations regularly. We have accomplished this with the help of internal and 3rd party security, when necessary.

We are proud to partner with the state and offer lottery at our stores. In fact, as of 2020, we are one of over six hundred grocery store locations engaged as lottery retail agents across Ohio and have helped handle over \$313 million wagers over the course of that year. That money generated is invested back into K-12 education for the state.

As you debate the merits of legalizing sports betting in Ohio, I urge you to consider allowing Ohio's existing lottery retailers, such as mine, to host these types of games in our brick-and-mortar stores. Since states were allowed to implement their own sports gaming systems, nearly half of the states have included retail in their structures.

Grocery stores and other retail food establishments are highly regulated. Customers expect a safe and secure environment every time they enter one of our member's stores. It is that high service standard that I believe sets our industry apart. By adding sports betting to our existing machines, we can offer our customers an enhanced experience while costing the state virtually nothing to implement.

Make no mistake: I am not against other establishments like Ohio's casinos and racinos from offering sports betting, too. But, if they are the only ones allowed to offer this type of game, it will further drive people away from my business. I have been a proud partner with the Ohio Lottery since grocery stores were allowed to offer lottery games in 1973. Additionally, limiting sports betting will lead to less accessible options for Ohioans, particularly in our rural areas.

Ohio grocery stores are committed and proven partners of the state lottery system and would appreciate the ability to provide an inclusive, equitable sports betting offering to our customers.

Thank you for your consideration,

Charlie Bassett

